

## Juanita Millender-McDonald

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE

DEMOCRAT FROM CALIFORNIA

1996–



Image courtesy of the Member

**JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD IS KNOWN AS ONE OF THE FIVE** most effective Members of the House of Representatives due to her ability to reach across the aisle and pass bipartisan legislation.<sup>1</sup> She has been dubbed a skilled legislator and creative leader whose relentless capacity to get the job done has produced many initiatives that were congressional firsts.

Millender-McDonald, the first Democratic Chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues to initiate a meeting with Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader-Ginsberg to discuss relevant issues with women Members of the House; she was first to lead a delegation of women Members to the United Nations to speak on the plight of women globally and to draw attention to the issue of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation among women and girls; she instituted the first National Teen Dating Violence Week to speak out against violence against teen girls; she was the first to bring a Central Intelligence Agency Director to the City of Watts to address the issue of drugs allegedly being dumped in the city; and first to lead a delegation of women to New York City to meet with Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and the chairman of the New York Stock Exchange to develop strategies for increasing women's status in executive level management, financial portfolios, and investments.

She is the first African-American woman to hold the distinguished position of Ranking Member of the powerful Committee on House Administration, which oversees Federal Elections; the Library of Congress; Member Offices; the U.S. Capitol Police; the Capitol Fine Arts Board; the Smithsonian Institution; the National Zoo; and the Government Printing Office that produces the *Congressional Record*. She is a senior member of both the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Small Business Committee.

In recognition of women who served our country in uniform during wartime, Millender-McDonald initiated the first annual Memorial Day Tribute to Women in the Military at the Women's Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery. She has led the fight to secure millions of dollars for the maintenance of the memorial and

another \$50 million for counseling services for our returning men and women veterans serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Additionally, she has spoken out against genocide in Cambodia, Darfur, and other regions of the world where human rights are in danger or ignored. She has also worked with former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Ambassador John Miller on human trafficking and women's rights issues globally.

Millender-McDonald has investigated widespread voting irregularities and voter disenfranchisement. She called for the first election reform field hearing held in recent congressional history in Ohio.

Congresswoman Millender-McDonald's effective focus on transportation issues has resulted in her becoming one of the most respected voices on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, where she has secured billions of dollars for California. In the latter part of 2005, she led the fight to have the Pentagon reconsider its decision to halt production of the C-17 planes that are produced in California. Congresswoman Millender-McDonald led a delegation from her district for a meeting with the Secretary of the Air Force. The pressure she put on military officials has forced them to stall the closing of the C-17 manufacturing facility. Also in 2005, Congresswoman Millender-McDonald played a key role in the crafting and ultimate passage of the six-year Transportation Reauthorization Act (TEA-LU), the largest public works legislation in our nation's history.

Congresswoman Millender-McDonald is a life member of the National Association for the Advancement of Color People (NAACP) and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She serves on the board of directors of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the board of trustees of Second Baptist Church, Los Angeles. She is the founder and executive director of the League of African-American Women, an organization of more than 40 African-American women's groups, and the founder of the Young Advocates, a political leadership-training program for African Americans between the ages of 18 and 35.

Congresswoman Millender-McDonald earned a bachelor of science degree in business administration from the University of Redlands, a master's degree in educational administration from California State University-Los Angeles, and teaching and administration credentials from the California State University system. She is married to James McDonald, Jr., and they are the proud parents and grandparents of five adult children and five grandchildren.

#### FOR FURTHER READING

*Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress*, "Juanita Millender-McDonald," <http://bioguide.congress.gov>

#### NOTES

- 1 John McCaslin, "Inside the Beltway: Top Producers," 13 April 2005, *Washington Times*: A9.